

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

No. 209.—Vol. V.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 1885.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

CONTENTS.

Papers of the late Mrs. Howitt Watts.....	1	A Demonstration of "The Passage of Matter through Matter".....	6
Secularism and Spiritualism.....	2	The Spiritual Outlook—XI.....	7
On Facts of the Divining Rod.....	3	Reviews.....	8
An American Scientist on the Divining Rod and Planchette.....	3	A Short Sermon for Spiritualists.....	8
Contradictions of Spiritualism.....	4	Extraordinary Spiritualistic Revelations at Blackburn.....	9
Spiritualism from a Roman Catholic Point of View.....	4	Materialisations & Transfigurations.....	10
Mr. Stuart Cumberland's Challenge.....	5	Direct Spirit-Writing.....	11
Testimonial to Mr. Morse.....	5	Spiritualism in the Provinces.....	11

[The Editor of "LIGHT" desires it to be distinctly understood that he can accept no responsibility as to the opinions expressed by Contributors and Correspondents. Free and courteous discussion is invited, but writers are alone responsible for the articles to which their names are attached.]

"M.A. (OXON.)"

We regret to have to state that the expressed intention of our esteemed contributor to resume "Notes by the Way" in the present issue must be deferred. Rheumatic pains, flying about the body ever since his fall, have developed into a severe attack of rheumatic gout, which finds his enfeebled system an easy prey. He is confined to his bed, suffering great pain, and quite unable to attend to anything.

PAPERS OF THE LATE MRS. HOWITT WATTS.

(Continued from p. 536.)

[Among the papers of the late Mrs. Howitt Watts was a little MS. volume, which she used to call "The Brown Manuscript." This she believed to have belonged to the late Robert Chambers. It contains stories of somnambulism, second-sight, clairvoyance, trance, vision, and ghostly visitation. They were probably collected by Mr. Robert Chambers, and, on Mrs. Watts' lamented departure, I received them for publication in "LIGHT." This was her intention had she been able to carry out her desires.—"M.A. (Oxon.)"]

VIII.

VISION OF THE TWO WIVES.

Mr. Oliphant, formerly one of the arbitrators in Lloyd's in London, was a gentleman of great respectability and of good fortune. He was a Highlander by birth, distantly related to Lord Oliphant. At times he used to amuse his friends by recounting histories connected with the superstition in the Highlands. By the grave manner in which he recounted them it was evident that he himself had faith in the strange gift of the Highlanders.

Mr. Oliphant was married to a lady of most attractive manners and amiable disposition, and who possessed many accomplishments. She, having a strong mind, was consulted by her husband upon all his private affairs. He had the misfortune to lose this lady after a very short illness. This misfortune so much affected him that for some time he was quite unfitted for business.

Some months of his widowhood having elapsed he was one night lying awake in his bed, when he saw—according to his own declaration—the figure of his wife enter the room. She was attired in black; with her came another lady attired in white, like a bride. To this lady the phantom of his wife directed his attention by pointing toward her.

The two figures glided towards a door opposite to the one by which they had entered, and left the apartment.

Mr. Oliphant sprang up, and, running to the door by which the ladies had vanished, called his wife by name, but he saw no one there. A nephew of Mr. Oliphant's who was staying in the house, hearing his uncle call the name of his wife, and open the door, ran into the passage, where his uncle related to him the strange vision which he had just had.

This circumstance revived the grief of Mr. Oliphant and in a short time he appeared to have lost his reason, and also, it seemed, his affection for his wife's memory, for he immediately set off travelling, in search, he declared, of the new wife whom he that night had seen in vision.

He visited Scotland where the connections of his family resided. When his relatives saw him they determined to follow him to Edinburgh, in order there to place him in confinement.

Two nephews followed him to Edinburgh, and for two days sought him in vain. They then met accidentally their uncle in a carriage with a lady seated beside him, —both being dressed in light-coloured apparel. Mr. Oliphant recognised his nephews, stopped the carriage, alighted with alacrity, warmly greeted his nephews, and with the ceremony of a finished gentleman presented them to his wife, to whom he had been married the previous day.

His conversation was perfectly sane. He took his nephews to a furnished house which he had hired, and where everything was found in perfect style and order.

During the course of the evening, when in the drawing-room with the bride, one of the nephews learned from her that she had met Mr. Oliphant at the English Chapel in York-place, as she was leaving, after the marriage of one of her relations. To the surprise of the wedding party, Mr. Oliphant accosted her, saying, "Madam, I have been seeking you ever since my dear wife introduced me to you," after which he burst into tears.

Mr. Oliphant's comportment had been so frank and genuine that he had interested the gentlemen present, and he had been invited to return home with the bridal guests. That evening he told the history of his vision to the lady whom he had thus arrested, and implored for an immediate marriage. Mr. Oliphant being known to persons of high respectability in Edinburgh, all inquiries were answered in a very satisfactory manner and the result was their immediate marriage.

At the time of the marriage, and also when his nephews thus visited him in Edinburgh, he appeared perfectly in his right mind, and they sincerely hoped that all would be well. Within a few weeks, however, both his nephew and his wife felt that it was not safe for him to be at liberty, and he was placed in the establishment of Mr. Hughes. There I have spent many an evening with him. In his apparently sane moments I have repeatedly heard him relate the history as here written by me.

His second wife never saw him again. He died at an advanced age.

He asserted repeatedly to me that the lady whom he married as his second wife was not only the same person whom he had seen with the figure of his first wife, but that she wore, when he met her at York-place, the same dress in which he had beheld her that night. He regarded this as an instance of the second-sight of the Highlanders.

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

SECULARISM AND SPIRITUALISM.

[This article is written by one of the ablest expounders and defenders of Secularism in this country, to whom we give a hearty welcome as a contributor to "LIGHT." Reverent criticism, no matter from what source it comes, can, we believe, only result in benefit to Spiritualism. Moreover, it is well, at times, to be able to see ourselves as others see us. "Sidney Short" is, of course, only a *nom de plume*, assumed for reasons explained to us, which are perfectly satisfactory.—ED. of "LIGHT."]

It is most interesting to trace the growth of religions, and institutions, and to see how they illustrate and confirm the opinion that the principles of evolution which have been discovered in the worlds of animal and vegetable life are of universal application. The laws of development (which are often summed up in the one word, evolution) are as binding upon the individual as upon the race, and it only needs the exercise of sufficient care and patience to discover in any particular case that the changes which occur are in conformity with such laws.

Isaac Taylor wrote on the "Natural History of Enthusiasm," but I do not recall any attempt yet made on the Natural History of Conversion.

This field also will be worked in due time, but, meanwhile, we should try to keep the ground clear from unnecessary weeds, which will, if left unchecked, become a mass of unnecessary entanglement.

Conversion means always a turning from *and* turning to. It does not mean an increase of knowledge, but the adopting an opinion which is incompatible with that previously held, and therefore the abandonment of such previously held opinion.

A few examples will at once make this clear.

If increased study produces the conviction that monarchical institutions are better than republican, the man so convinced is converted to monarchical views, and if his views had been altered in the opposite direction he would have been converted into a Republican.

If he had held protective tariffs to be beneficial and therefore necessary, he would, if convinced that Free Trade was preferable, become a Free trader. He would have been converted from a Protectionist to a Free trader.

If the Protectionist had from study become a Republican, it would not be correct to describe him as converted from Protection to Republicanism, for Republicanism does not necessitate the abandonment of Protection.

Conversion only takes place when a man changes his way of action in the prosecution of the same pursuit, or alters his views respecting one and the same group of mental ideas.

If a physician is converted to Homœopathy he adopts a different method of attacking disease, and, if a politician is converted to the doctrine of Free Trade, he changes his view respecting one problem of political economy.

Now we would ask—Can anyone be converted from Secularism to Spiritualism? I consider it impossible. Can anyone be converted from vegetarianism to Præ-Raphaelism?

Every one will see it would be impossible. Both are impossible cases, and for the same reason—they do not refer to changes of action in the *same pursuit* nor change of view respecting the same group of mental ideas.

The recently reported conversion of Mr. G. Chainey to Spiritualism leads me to attempt to put clearly before Spiritualists the principles of Secularism, and to shew that both views may be right and that they are not incompatible with one another. If a Secularist becomes convinced of the genuineness of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism, and accepts some of the most important conclusions, he need not therefore abandon any of the principles of Secularism nor cease to lecture from its platforms.

What does Spiritualism teach? If I at all rightly under-

stand its lessons, they are chiefly *two*. The first relates to an extension of the views of matter, or to a different way of viewing phenomena from that which is adopted by the materialistic school. This clearly cannot contradict, nor be contradicted by, any principle of Secularism. The second lesson relates to the extension of personal, individual existence beyond that catastrophe which we call death.

Spiritualism, then, relates to speculative views about another life; while Secularism relates to conduct in this present life.

A man's speculative views of a possible future life may be changed without necessarily altering his views as to the conduct of the present life.

He may, on the other hand, change his views respecting morality or conduct in this life without changing his views about any future existence.

Of course *he may* change his views regarding the present and the future, but in that case a double conversion takes place.

It may be suggested that in these matters we are only quibbling with words—but not so, for we have only to put a clear image before us of some physical changes to see the exactness of our reasoning. Perhaps the simplest image would be when red discs and white discs and red squares and white squares are used as signals.

The red disc may be exchanged for a white one, or a red square may be substituted for the red disc. In the first case there is a change of colour, and in the latter a change of form.

It would be meaningless to say the red sign was changed for a square sign, and if such words were used they indicate that in the speaker's mind the roundness of the sign was present though only the redness was expressed.

We may let white colour stand as a sign for Spiritualism, and red colour for Materialism, round surface for Secularism, and square surface for religious authority—we then see that we may have Secularism with either a spiritualistic or a materialistic colouring, and religious authority with either a spiritualistic or materialistic colouring. We at the same time see why Secularism can be exchanged for religious authority and Materialism for Spiritualism—and why it is impossible to be converted from Secularism to either Materialism or Spiritualism?

The interest of this subject to my mind comes from my belief that Spiritualism *may* be true, and my strong conviction of the necessity for the spread of Secularism, and my dread of the mischief which results from the teaching of religious authority.

If, having achieved freedom of thought, we add to our knowledge some truths of Spiritualism, we shall have one joy which fuller knowledge brings; but if we allow our minds to be enslaved by new chains forged by Spiritualism out of the links of the so recently shaken-off superstitions, our last state will be worse than our first.

"The doer, not the dreamer, breaks the baleful spell
Which binds with iron bands the earth on which we dwell.
The brow of wrong is laurel-crowned, not girt with shame,
And love, and truth, and right, as yet are but a name.
Oh dreamer, wake! your brother man is still a slave;
And thousands go heart-crushed each day into the grave.
From out time's urn your golden hours flow fast away;
Then dreamer, up! and do life's work while yet 'tis day."

SIDNEY SHORT.

PROPHETIC VISION.—The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* gives this from a correspondent:—"The following is a family tradition, as having happened to my ancestress, Mrs. Fell, about the end of the last century. Her husband was an officer in the British navy. It was in the time of the war with France, and he was away on service. She lived in London. While sitting with her infant and nurse, she had a vision of her husband's head passing before her, his eyes gazing upon her. In due course the news came of his having been killed in action; a cannon ball had taken off his head. The event coincided with the time of her vision, of which she had taken a note."

ON FACTS OF THE DIVINING ROD.

III.

Dr. Ashburner, in further exemplification of the relation between the odic effluence from human hands, demonstrated by the experiments of Reichenbach, and that from branches of trees, demonstrated as we have already seen, relates the following instructive cases :—

My patient Mrs. G. has a maid, Harriet P., who is highly sensitive, easily succumbing to the mesmeric force. I found her a good subject for experiments with the hazel and whitethorn. On a stick of either being presented to her, she took hold of it with avidity, and in less than a minute passed into the mesmeric sleep, denoting that the effluence from the stick had induced a tonic state of the nervous system and even a spasmodic state of the muscles, rendering it difficult to loosen the stick from her grasp.

The hazel and whitethorn induced the same phenomena in other patients; in two of them, a stick of either being held towards them, with the end upwards which is upwards in growing, it exerted such a force upon them that they seized it with both hands; one of them would run after it, and getting hold of it would appear supremely satisfied, soon passing into the tonic state of sleep; but if it were turned before she reached it, tapering end downwards, it exerted a repellent force, and she made gestures of repugnance.

If while one of these sticks was being held by any of these patients, the upgrowing end upwards, a piece of gold, or the pointed end of a rock crystal, were applied to it, the stick would be hastily dropped, with the exclamation that it was hot. A male patient, who had been several times put into the mesmeric sleep by passes, on holding successively pieces of these sticks, felt with each a tendency to sleep, and a sensation of heat.

Another patient, Susan L., highly sensitive, while in the sleep-waking state, exclaimed that she saw "a shower of fine little sparks" come from a piece of hazel which happened to be in my hand. When I quietly changed the stick for another of fir or ash, she saw nothing, but again the "little sparks" when I resumed my hold of the hazel or whitethorn. Her perceptions in this experiment were always the same, and they were tested in various ways. Eight other sensitives were separately tested as to their susceptibility to the effluence from different kinds of wood, and each gave corroborative results. Numerous others, with lower degrees of sensitiveness, gave different results; with some, indeed, they were inappreciable.

The sensitiveness of Mrs. G.'s maid, Harriet P., was put to very practical use. In a letter to a friend now lying before me, Mrs. G. writes from her place in the country :—"July 9th, 1845.—We have made a curious experiment here with Harriet P. My husband, the water here being very indifferent, has had wells dug time after time in the hope of finding better; but none being productive, he finally said he would make no further trials. I suggested one with the divining rod, as they do in Devonshire; he did not object, and Harriet was willing to hold the rod. So we provided ourselves with one of hazel, and accompanied by two friends staying here, we went to what seemed to me a likely field. Upon my putting the rod into Harriet's hand she went into the sleep, and then held it with both hands so tightly that I, in order to release her grasp, applied my gold chain to it, as I saw Dr. A. do; then she held it with one hand, and, taking her own way, walked about slowly until she stopped suddenly as if shot. The rod then turned slowly round, twisting her hand backwards, and she exclaimed, 'Here's water! Don't speak; let me look!' She sank upon the grass as if giddy, again grasping the stick with both hands. Having marked the spot, after a little I woke her."

Mrs. G. goes on to write that in the evening she mesmerised Harriet into the sleep. On referring to the morning's work, Harriet remembered everything, and said that the water seemed about a yard beneath the surface. On subsequently digging to that depth, water rose; and Mr. G. had a well sunk there which furnishes a good supply of excellent water.

AN AMERICAN SCIENTIST ON THE DIVINING ROD AND PLANCHETTE.

At the Electrical Exhibition of Philadelphia, Professor Raymond delivered a lecture, reported in the *Progressive Age*, on the Divining Rod. He said that in remote times, it was employed for various purposes, among others to aid even in detecting criminals; that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was in common use throughout Europe in the hands of searchers for springs and metals. Numerous treatises were written about it; the theory in them most generally adopted being in accordance with the Cartesian philosophy, which taught that from all things in Nature pass emanations of infinitesimal invisible corpuscles, each of its kind, and each kind influencing sensitive individuals in a special mode appreciable to themselves; the operators with the divining rod being sensitive to those from springs, metals, &c.

The lecturer described the rod most commonly used in America as a small forked branch of hazel, roughly trimmed to the form of the letter Y, the forked ends being held in the operator's closed hands, palms upwards; the stem, pointed outwards, was expected to dip downwards when the operator, walking around, came over a subterranean spring or metal.

The lecturer said that if he adopted any hypothesis in the matter, it would be Chevreul's, in which, as he stated it, the words temperature, heat-conductivity, sensitive, unconscious volition, and minute muscular motions, figure in a bewilderingly "mixed" manner; but that, after all, he was more inclined to regard the divining rod as a lingering remainder of a once strong superstition, entitled perhaps to the same consideration as the Planchette—an object of study, it may be, from a psychological point of view, but not worthy of the attention of scientific geologists or "prospectors."

To this lecture, the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* says, "one of our correspondents has drawn our attention. After satirically suggesting that, if it were possible to use the wand upon the heads of some of our scientists, water might be found, and that at no great depth," he goes on: "The only way of meeting assumptions based upon ignorance and scientific prejudices, is by the statement of facts—and here is one. My own highly-esteemed mother could, with the wand, as described by this lecturer, find water, and even approximately state the depth at which it would be met with. At Sigel, Illinois, where all trials to get water had proved futile, and well-sinking had been abandoned in consequence, my mother, when visiting there, was successful by this means in discovering several springs.

"The discoverer in these cases is only a passive participant in the operation, a medium, just as the electrical telegraph wire is.

"Last spring she discovered water for a well at my own place, quite contrary to my own and the calculations of some practical men. She was also right in her anticipation as to depth and quantity, estimated by her by the force exerted through the rod in turning over in her grasp.

"An experiment was once made by a 'doubting Thomas' of an investigating turn of mind; he coated the ends of a hazel-rod with sealing-wax; upon my mother holding it by the waxed ends there was no result, while by the bare wood, over the same spot, its movements gave the indication of the presence of water.—J. C. Hoffmann, M.D., Jefferson, Illinois."

CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is preferable that correspondents should append their names and addresses to communications. In any case, however, these must be supplied to the Editor as a guarantee of good faith.]

Contradictions of Spiritualism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have to ask you to allow me to thank your correspondents who have noticed my letter, and have striven to give me information on the vexed subject under consideration.

I wrote at a time when much verbiage was used on a topic which I considered beyond the depth of the public mind, viz., Theosophy or Occultism; and the despair produced by such conflicting opinion dictated my words. In reply to "E.H.W.," I consider that "reason" cannot help us in the matter of Spiritualism. We can only reason according to our *knowledge* of things, and as we can have no knowledge of the other world except by hearsay, reason cannot be brought into play. The real state of affairs in the "future" may be contrary to all our reason and expectations; we have to receive our information without being able to say "Yea" or "Nay," and our only question can be "Is the authority reliable?"

We certainly do want to know what is in the spirit world, and my difficulty is that I cannot get to know in such a manner as to make the information satisfactory. For instance, why should not two or three spirits, controlling the same medium in immediate succession, be able to give a description of the topography of their sphere, in the same way as a tourist would? and yet I invariably cannot get this, although there certainly is a spiritual landscape? Whenever I try this with an illiterate medium I am disappointed, and the affair looks suspicious.

To "A.E. Major." I think there is a misprint in my letter. I wrote (I believe) *unworldly* motive of the occultist, not "unworthy." I believe the motive which animates an occultist to be entirely unworldly, as we understand the word.

I do not seek to grasp the whole subject while here; I only complain that in the simple matter of *reliability* we are at sea, tossed to and fro, our rudder helpless, our compass demagnetised. The spirits do not vary in their morality—that is perfect; but it is only the morality common to all men, free from sectarian bias; and, as such, is no speciality of Spiritualism. I do not even seek for a higher spirituality in Spiritualism than I can find out of it, because my observation has dispossessed me of that idea. I find that Spiritualists are no more spiritual or moral than their neighbours, and that they are as earthy and as jealous. I will, however, give them this credit; they will spend their talents and time to benefit the public to their own detriment. The advice of "A.E. Major" is applicable to all men, "humility emptying out of self," but it does not give any light upon the subject of spirit control.

To "Lily." I know that some spirits are disembodied men, with like passions as ourselves, but there is this difference. We can percept our men, when receiving information from them, but our "spirits" are behind a curtain, beyond our grasp, and we are totally at their mercy, as regards any proof: and where you can test them once by means of two different clairvoyants you are a hundred times unable to bring such methods to bear. The "contradictions" are some of the things which are the great stumbling blocks, and if these contradictions can spring from lying, tricky, misinformed spirits, or are produced by the bias of the sitters, how can we decide what to believe when "Reason is helpless in the matter," as I have said before? I don't think a mind requires any calibre to comprehend a simple fact or statement. It is not in the hidden mysteries of God's deep works that the trouble lies, but in the statement of simple facts, which any spirit must know if it has any knowledge at all.

The advice "Lily" gives is such as should certainly insure good results, but is it not in the experience of every mature Spiritualist that these results *do not follow*? Witness the affair which was related some few years ago, of the family which commenced their private séances with earnest prayer, and were for months the dupes of lying spirits. I also know of a medium friend who is in the most susceptible and suitable condition for control when he has had a few glasses of beer, and at that time the tone of his discourse is most elevating; no one could take exception to its quality, if the source were undoubted. But the query arises, How much is due to the medium and how much to the spirits? With regard to the

MIND of the sitters, I remember that a few months ago a score of sincere investigators were sitting with a physical medium for materialisation. I feel certain that guile and deceit were absent from our minds; but what did we get? *Three yards of calico.* I question to this day whether the medium was a trickster or not, but yet evil results followed good intentions. In other words, while we were waiting for a form which dimly appeared between the opened curtains, a sitter, a thorough Spiritualist, seized the white something and found in his hands "calico." The medium protested that he did not know anything about the affair. If the spirits brought that calico from a distance to cheat us it was most certainly not caused by the state of *our minds*. Whether the medium cheated us or the spirits did so, I cannot decide. In any case "sincerity was rewarded with deceit." In none of the letters which have appeared in answer to mine has there been given any light on the subject. These letters are full of advice and warning to Spiritualists like me, but they don't teach me how to "discern spirits."

The opinion of "C.C.C.'s" Jesuit father, and indeed of many others, that the controls are mostly evil spirits, is not close enough to the facts of the case. I cannot believe that such prayers and morality, and the forbearance exhibited by spirits in their intercourse with us are the offspring of evil.

There is a depth of feeling and reverence in the prayers of the most illiterate medium which I have never witnessed in any normal speaker; an absence of rant and of familiarity, which is so painfully manifest by its presence in many good preachers. If evil can assume in such a manner the garb of light, how shall we tell which is which? It is a fiction about "the devil appearing as an angel of light." Vice and evil carry their trade marks about them. They may conceal ulterior and wicked motives, but we are not deceived when the cloven foot appears. I have never perceived anything immoral in any control, even when the medium has been *no saint*. I don't think "evil spirits" solves the question. "C.C.C." is a happy man; *he has the truth*. And so says the Protestant, the Mormon, the Hindu, and the Materialist. And someone ever asks "What is truth?" Happy man to build such a religious structure on such a basis, with such lofty results, as is evidenced by his religion.

To F. W. Thurstan, M.A. Although six persons might be unable to agree as to the apparent size of the sun, they would have no doubt as to whether or not there was one shining. The facts or phenomena point to a very probable solution, which yet does not cover all the facts, and it is this: That the embodied spirit has power to read the history of individuals while the body, or mentality, belonging to the said spirit is unconscious of its power. There is so much of the individuality of the medium in the communications that this is a plausible explanation; and yet I am conscious that the explanation does not cover all the ground, but only a part. If Occultism had not reared its head against Spiritualism I should have been satisfied with the latter; and if my personal experience of Spiritualism had not been long and critical I should have been satisfied with Occultism. As it is the one clashes with the other, and I can exclaim "How happy should I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away." The spiritual theory is certainly the simplest to me; but that does not make it true. With all my doubts and disappointments in Spiritualism, I love it still, but I want to know it in reality, and not in doubt.—Yours sincerely,

ESOR.

63, Manchester-road, Bradford, December 5th, 1884.

Spiritualism from a Roman Catholic Point of View.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Would you kindly allow me to remark that Signor Damiani's letter in no wise touches my objections; or proves that there is anything *new* to be learned from Modern Spiritualism, although of course to the gentleman in question some things may appear *new*, while to others the same doctrines are quite ancient? In the first place Signor Damiani has learned from Spiritualism that "eternal punishment is a myth." In that case he has learned a consoling, and to our human comprehension, a reasonable doctrine; but at the same time spirits have certainly taught that the punishment for evil doing may be so prolonged through endless cycles and phases of existence as almost to merit the name "eternal," seeing that this is a word of which our earthly conceptions can form no idea. The Infinite and the Eternal are those things which "cannot by searching be found out," as an old, old book declares. But even

this is *not new*. Origen in the third century taught that "devils and reprobates should be saved after one thousand years," and that "souls were created long before this world, and for sinning in Heaven were sent down into their bodies as into prisons." Tertullian about the same time taught somewhat similar doctrines; for instance, that *souls* were of a corporeal substance, and increased and decreased with the size of the body. True, both Origen and Tertullian were excommunicated by the early Church, but many learned Catholics have been in doubt as to whether certain of their doctrines were really false, or whether they were excommunicated for arrogating to themselves a right of speaking with that "authority" which only belonged to the chief Bishop, and before the proper time had come for properly expounding such doctrines. "I have many things to say, but ye cannot bear them now."

Then Spiritualism has further taught Signor Damiani that neither "priestly absolution nor purgatorial fire, fasting and abstinence, rosaries, scapularies, reliquies, and the like, have anything to do with the grand religion of Christ, much less with salvation." Now the fact is that if Spiritualism teaches these things, it teaches *nothing new*, seeing that he could have learned the same from Protestantism in general, and so could his great grandfather! Really, this information cannot be called *new*, and the only question remaining is whether it is true. Some spirits have testified to the benefit derived from all these things. The value of relics, &c., &c., has even been explained to some extent by mesmerism, and that by spirits at sances!

Perhaps Signor Damiani may say that these are spirits still labouring under delusions. I certainly would not be prepared to argue that question, nor enter upon their defence on that head, but I will only say that they were quite as likely to be correct as those who gave information of a contrary nature.

Then Signor Damiani has also learned from Spiritualism that "the greatest sinner, after atoning by remorse and repentance, is sure to enter the course of eternal progression, and that there is none infallible but our Father God." Most certainly this is a Christian doctrine, and how on earth does it happen that Signor Damiani did not learn it long ago at school from his Catechism? The only difficulty is the grace of acquiring a *true remorse and repentance*—a grace, alas! which does not descend on all sinners.

If Signor Damiani is, or rather has been, a Catholic, he knows full well that we believe in the infallibility of the Pope only because we believe the Infallible One speaks through him in matters ecclesiastical; and we also believe that we have sound Gospel authority for this belief;—but controversy of this kind is out of place here, and I only allude to it because Signor Damiani, while scouting sundry Catholic beliefs and practices, yet appears to believe in the infallibility of those spirits who have improved his views of religion!

For the rest, I quite agree with Signor Damiani, that if those "millions who have passed from belief to Atheism" can be brought to believe in immortality by Spiritualism, or anything else, they have much to be thankful for. But I fear that comparatively few have their eyes thus opened, for it is pretty much now as in the days when Jesus said: "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would they believe if one rose from the dead." Still, if even a few such Sadducees have been brought to believe—as I remarked in my former letter—to such, Spiritualism has certainly been of use.

Signor Damiani asks how I can possibly confound Modern Spiritualism with witchcraft? But I would ask in what particulars it differs from ancient necromancy, of which witchcraft is only another form? When once you have your spirit called from the "vasty deep,"—if you had only sufficient power and requisite knowledge, you could compel him to bring you some of the treasures of the deep! and you could also get him to torment your neighbours! and aid and abet you in doing likewise if you were so disposed! This, I believe, constituted "witchcraft," and I must again say that there is positively nothing *new* in the fact of communing with spirits. On the contrary, it is as old as history itself, and perhaps dives far into pre-historic times! Who knows whether the pre-historic skull at the South Kensington Museum was not that of a powerful medium, prime minister to a pre-Adamite king! one of the Genii kings, for instance!! Doubtless, Signor Damiani considers me a barbarian because I would not repeal the laws on witchcraft! But certainly I would not if a "witch" be a disagreeable fact; because the possessors of such power could be more deadly enemies to life and property than if they were armed with Martini rifles, or carried an unlimited supply of dynamite.

Can such things be? people will ask. But the readers of "LIGHT" can easily conceive the possibility of their existing, and it is highly probable that the knowledge of certain truths was the cause of the continuance on the Statute Books of these laws. For instance, the law of Scotland makes it penal to invoke or feed or deal with a "familiar" spirit in any way. The spirits who boil kettles and light fires, were well known in Scotland in former days under the name of "Brownies," and the goodwives were wont to make them offerings of milk and cream, &c., &c., hence the prohibition of "feeding" an evil spirit. At the same time the poor "Brownies" scarcely seem to have merited the name of "evil spirits." I have often sighed over their departure when a child, and dropped a tear to the memory of fairies no longer interfering in human affairs, by making things pleasant for good boys and girls!

I will not trespass farther on your valuable space except to reiterate, and that without fear of contradiction, that Modern Spiritualism is not, as some of its disciples fondly imagine, a "new and glorious revelation," but, on the contrary, only an old and (if carried much beyond its present development) a dangerous practice, which would doubtless lead to the same goal to which it has always led from the days of Moses, down to those of Queen Anne of gracious memory; or, I believe, even to those of George I. High and pure Spiritualism is simply religion, and in that respect it bears more or less relation to all revealed religions, and its true value consists in carrying salt, as it were, into those already existing, instead of trying to found a new sect, which, mingled with low Spiritualism or necromancy, could only end in disaster. It is well known that some Spiritualists welcome even the control of evil, or undeveloped spirits—as they call them—in the light of improving their (the spirits') morals. However, much I may differ from Madame Blavatsky, I am bound to say that she acted most charitably in endeavouring to warn those foolish people of the useless danger they incurred.

However, even this ultra charity is not *new*! It was anticipated by an old Scotch clergyman of the last century, who, after praying for every man, woman, child, and herd of cattle in his parish, said at last, with a sigh, "My brethren, let us pray for the De'il! Nobody prays for the puir De'il!"—Yours truly,
C. C. C.

Mr. Stuart Cumberland's Challenge.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The *Morning Post* tells us of a challenge by Mr. Stuart Cumberland and Mr. Labouchere, M.P., to Mr. W. Eglinton, viz.: that they will do by "natural means" what he professes to do by "spiritual methods."

If the lecturer and the legislator do that, I will undertake to eat their great coats and pay liberally for my dinner.

I met (by invitation) Mr. Stuart Cumberland, when, at the Charing Cross Hotel, some four years ago, he made his first appearance on any stage. I witnessed there his imitations of spiritual phenomena, and I then, in a brief address to his audience, told him they were as like the "real thing" as a lump of chalk is to a piece of cheese.

He may have improved his sleight of hand since this; but if the challenge be accepted it will be simply that; no more, no less; that is to say, if a fair, just, and honourable jury be appointed to try the case.

You will, no doubt, shew cause why the sum of £2,000—a large sum which I do not think Mr. Eglinton could "deposit"—should be placed in hands other than those of a gentleman for whose one thousand pounds an excellent and valuable London charity is yet patiently and "hopefully" waiting.

But I fancy the sum named (£2,000), which it is quite certain never can be raised to "deposit," is something like challenging a man who is paralysed in both hands to a duel à l'outrance with swords or pistols—giving him a choice of weapons. In a word, it is known beforehand that such a challenge cannot be accepted.—Your obedient servant,

S. C. HALL, F.S.A.

Testimonial to Mr. Morse.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Will you kindly permit me to acknowledge the following sums, on behalf of Mr. J. J. Morse:—

	£	s.	d.
R. A.	3	0	0
A Friend	2	0	0
T. Everitt, Esq.	0	10	6
T. Amos, Esq.	1	1	0

Yours truly,

FRANK EVERITT.

26, Penton-street, December 30th, 1884.

All Communications to be addressed to --

THE EDITOR OF "LIGHT,"
4, AVE MARIA LANE,
LONDON, E.C.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their sésances.

The Editor cannot undertake the return of manuscripts unless the writers expressly request it at the time of forwarding and enclose stamps for the return Postage.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.

ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.

Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 4s. 6d. Column, £2 2s. Page £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

Orders for Papers and Advertisements may be addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.

Cheques and Post Office Orders may be made payable to HENRY BARNES, at the Chief Office, London. Halfpenny Postage Stamps received for amounts under 10s.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

Subscriptions for 1885 are now due. Subscribers will oblige by forwarding these at once to "The Manager of 'LIGHT,'" 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C. Post Office Orders may be made payable to Henry Barnes. All Editorial Correspondence to be addressed to "The Editor."

Light :

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3RD, 1885.

A DEMONSTRATION OF "THE PASSAGE OF MATTER THROUGH MATTER."

In 1854 I sat with Home on his first arrival in this country, and was at once forced to believe in spiritualistic phenomena, because, among other evidence, I was permitted, *in the light*, to touch detached "materialised hands" — in form, size, temperature, and sensation the exact counterpart of human hands. Subsequently I obtained still more palpable evidence in the presence of the Davenport Brothers, and in experiments with Lotty Fowler and Slade. But although I have for thirty years from personal experience known that such hands can be produced by occult means, it has only been during the last three weeks, in which I have sat with three well-known mediums, that I have had my many years belief in the possibility of the materialisation of the *entire* human form converted into a positive knowledge that such forms are produced.

It is not, however, my intention in this letter to enter into the question of the materialised human form, but to confine my remarks to the question of what is called "The passage of matter through matter," a subject which has always had for my psycho-physical turn of mind a fascination stronger than any I have yet experienced regarding any other form of spiritual phenomena.

The two sésances I am about to describe were held in the house of my friend, Mr. Stuart-Menteath, and the medium was Mr. Husk, and all the sitters present were well known friends, viz., Captain James, General Maclean, Mrs. FitzGerald, the Rev. Mr. Newbold, Mr. and Miss Stuart-Menteath, myself, and others.

At the conclusion of the first sésance "*Irresistible*," having promised to give us, if possible, a demonstration of the "passage of matter through matter," requested Mr. Newbold to hold Mr. Husk's right hand, and Captain James to hold his left hand. He then requested Captain James to rise from his seat, when "*Irresistible*" immediately took

the chair Captain James had risen from, and *threaded it* on the arm of Mr. Newbold, who had retained his firm grasp of the medium's hand throughout.

An experiment of this kind may be regarded as complete; and the evidence so exactly given in Zöllner's book as translated by Mr. Massey under the title of "Transcendental Physics" may logically be considered as a settlement of the question; but facts so astounding as these can scarcely be realised by the scientific mind, without a proof personal to oneself, and this proof I got during my second sésance with Mr. Husk.

I may here mention that for four years I have been experimenting with my iron rings, and in the *Spiritualist* for 1880, and in "LIGHT" for 1881, I described how I got my iron ring many times, under test conditions, passed on the wrists of those present, but never until the 18th December, just passed, has the iron ring been placed on the medium's wrist while I held his hand, and thus shewn from personal experience that such feats were to me absolute facts.

The experiment I had with Mr. Husk was in this wise: The sésance was held, as I have said, at the house of Mr. Stuart-Menteath, and at the end of our sésance the spirit who calls himself "*Irresistible*," said to me, "Dr. Wyld, I am now going to try to pass your ring on to the wrist of the medium; and I wish you to hold his hand in order that you may be perfectly satisfied." To that I replied, "It is very kind of you, '*Irresistible*,' but you know you have never, during the last four years, been able to pass my ring when I have held the hand of your medium, because, as you have always said, my '*magnetism*' was too positive for you to penetrate, cutting your '*magnetism*,' as it were, at right angles." To which he replied, "Yes, but I think I can do it now, and I will try, if you will hold the medium's hand, as I wish you to get positive evidence."

Accordingly, in the dark, I took my place at the medium's left hand, and with my right hand held the fingers of the medium's left hand in a firm and determined grasp. I then passed my left hand over the medium's arm and wrist to satisfy myself that no ring was thereon. "*Irresistible*" then gave me my own oval ring to hold in order that it might be ready. I was satisfied it was my own ring from its oval form, its size, and its thickness. He then took the ring out of my hand and rung it three times on the table, and then said, "Now, here goes," or words to that effect, whereupon the medium, who appeared to be in deep trance, gave a cry as of pain, and struggled convulsively to escape, while I redoubled my energetic grasp of his hand, and, light being called for, to my astonishment and delight, I found my own privately-marked ring on the medium's wrist; and I am now absolutely certain that my ring was placed there by an occult process called the "*passage of matter through matter*."

The evidence is as follows:—

1. The ring I had specially made of an ovoid form in order that from its flatness it could the less easily pass over the rounded form of the compressed hand and yet have the shape of the flat wrist.

2. The ring contained my own three private marks.

3. The ring was made according to measurement, of a size to render its passage over Mr. Husk's hand, according to the assertion of all present, by normal means impossible. The long diameter of the oval ring was 2.75 inches, the short diameter was two inches, the mean diameter was 2.375 inches. The internal circumference measured almost exactly 7.8 inches, and the thickness of the iron was 5-16ths of an inch, while the circumference of Mr. Husk's compressed hand, as measured by a cord tightly pulled by myself and General Maclean, so as to indent the flesh, was found to be 9.15 inches. The ring was thus by measurement, as we had all found by experiment, of a size impossible to pass over Mr. Husk's hand, and when it was on his wrist we found it equally impossible to remove it. But in a few

minutes, as we all walked about in the light, the ring fell off the medium's wrist as if it had been a large ring.

4. But even if it were possible to pass an object whose dimension was 9·15 through an aperture measuring 7·8, only, this impossible possibility was rendered manifestly impossible by the passage being debarred by my own hand.

5. I satisfied myself that the ring on Mr. Husk's wrist was my own ring by its private marks.

6. I satisfied myself that the ring had not been tampered with, but was intact, by suspending it while on the medium's wrist by a string, and ringing it.

7. I satisfied myself by examination that there was no ring on Mr. Husk's wrist or arm previous to the experiment.

8. I therefore again assert that we have in this experiment a demonstration that spirit power can suspend the cohesive force, and by an occult process perform a physical feat which transcends the greatest known wonders of chemical or electrical science.

Having been for four years labouring to get this test, I need scarcely add that my long-suffering patience was completely rewarded, and I had always been told by "Irresistible" and others that I should at last succeed if I persevered.

9. With the exception of the medium, the sitters were all in a normal state of mind, and neither asleep, intoxicated, mad, biologised, nor banded together to lie.

My sensations on receiving this demonstration were intense, because I then knew that the impossible to science as at present taught, was possible to spirit, which was thus shewn to be an intelligent force before whose will, chemical, and mechanical, and magnetic forces are as servants. It shewed me that the teaching of Materialism was untrue. It shewed how the Lord of the spirit was Lord over matter, and it suggested how we, when we have shuffled off this mortal coil, shall be able to surround ourselves with, or separate ourselves from, objective material forms according to the will of our imaginations, or affections, as has been so profoundly said by Swedenborg.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

December 21st, 1884.

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND.

	£	s.	d.
Amount already announced	270	3	6
P. H. Nind	2	10	0
J. H. Gledstones	1	11	6
C. C. Pearson	1	0	0

Remittances may be sent either to Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Rose Villa, Church End, Finchley, N.; or to Mr. Morell Theobald, 62, Granville Park, Lewisham, S.E.

A BARRISTER'S PLAN FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF SPIRITUAL LITERATURE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS ALREADY PROMISED.

Those marked * are annual subscriptions if required.

* "A Barrister"	£25	0	0
* Lieutenant-Colonel Wynch	10	0	0
* The Countess of Caithness	10	0	0
* The Hon. Percy Wyndham, M.P.	10	0	0
* General Campbell	10	0	0
* "Lily"	10	0	0
Morell Theobald	10	0	0
* "A Professional Medium"	5	0	0
Mrs. Hennings	5	0	0
R. Stuart	5	0	0
Mrs. Proctor	3	3	0
* "M. B."	2	2	0
W. P. Morgan	2	0	0
J. H. Gledstones	1	11	6
A. K. and E. M.	1	0	0

Total amount required £250. Promises may be sent to Editor of "LIGHT," 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.

MR. W. EGLINTON.—We are asked to call the special attention of Spiritualists to the fact that Mr. Eglinton has changed his address. It is now 11, Langham-street, Portland-place, W.

THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

XI.

The conversion of one of the two most eloquent advocates of Secularism in America, and the fraternal correspondence of these two—Colonel Ingersoll and Mr. Chainey—on the subject, are matters of deep interest to all Spiritualists. Every reader of the two leading organs of Secularism in this country, the *National Reformer* and the *Secular Review*, can see that they are conducted with extraordinary ability, and a devotion to what the writers hold to be the truth which is above all praise. If I do not always admire the methods and style of their protests against the popular theologies, I can recognise the martyr spirit even in those who spend their lives in the sturdy denial of all the facts which assure us of the reality of a spirit life.

* * *

A secularist like George Chainey, once convinced of the reality of Spiritualism, cannot fail to give his knowledge to thousands of those who most need it. I do not forget that it was a secularist lecturer converted to Spiritualism, who was the means of giving us such a medium as Mr. Eglinton, who, from the Ganges to the Mississippi, has given to thousands visible, audible, tangible evidences of immortality.

* * *

The erection of a Spiritual Temple in Boston, the most cultured of American cities, by a wealthy and devoted Spiritualist, at a cost of a quarter of a million of dollars, is an example which we may hope will not be lost. But before much can be expected in this way there must be some order and organisation. People do not make such offerings to any cause until they have some reasonable assurance that they will be wisely used for its promotion. For a truth like Spiritualism men will give freely the moment they can see that their gifts will extend its comforts and blessings to those who need them.

* * *

But one thing is needful. There must be a broad, liberal platform. The creed of Spiritualism must be very simple and very comprehensive. The two words which end the Apostles' Creed—"Life Everlasting"—may be enough. True, it has been the faith of the whole human race from time immemorial—but it is a faith now dying out among the most cultured peoples in the world. Faith is not enough, and therefore it is being replaced by knowledge. We, who are Spiritualists, have that knowledge, and we are trying to give it to others, because all knowledge is good, and all ignorance and falsehood is uncomfortable and dangerous.

* * *

It is true that this knowledge will come to all in time, but that is not a good excuse for withholding it or for not seeking it now. All men need it for comfort or for guidance. The highest motive any one can have for all right and noble action is the fact of immortality. Men and women are heroic in the hope of being remembered after death. How much stronger is the motive to all good deeds when we know that we shall live on and on to enjoy them. To have an honourable epitaph—to have one's body moulder in Westminster Abbey, is something—but to live with those for whom we have laboured seems to us much better.

* * *

Yet people ask:—"What is the good of Spiritualism?" The good! Consider for a moment what it has done for every one who has examined its phenomena—or, to use a better word, its facts. It has removed the dread of death. It has banished the horrors of Calvinistic theology. With the assurance of a continued existence it has brought also the prospect of eternal progress in wisdom and love, and all that constitutes the joy of life. We have a reasonable hell—if we deserve one. We have no less a reasonable heaven within our reach. In peace, in hope, in assurance of knowledge, we do our work cheerfully, ready for the change that awaits us.

* * *

Really! what can we do better for the world about us than to give to others the knowledge that we find so good and so pleasant for ourselves? What can we do better than to clear the minds of men of the horrors that are preached to them every Sunday from thousands of pulpits, in which men labour to make God a fiend, and fill a fiery hell with nine-tenths of all humanity, destined by the Eternal fore-knowledge to be tortured to all eternity! This horror, taught to millions.

Spiritualism has destroyed; and people ask, "What is the good of it?"

* * *

One of the best newspapers in England, if not the very best in some ways, is the *Weekly Chronicle* of Joseph Cowen, M.P., Newcastle-on-Tyne, a man so truly liberal that he came from the House of Commons one night to preside at a spiritualist meeting addressed by a distinguished scientist, also a resident of Newcastle. Needless to say that the *Chronicle* has been open to the facts of Spiritualism.

* * *

In a recent number, the *Weekly Chronicle* gives Lord Lindsay's—the present Earl of Balcarres—description of the famous levitation of Mr. Home, when he was carried out of one window, seventy feet from the ground, and brought in at another—a stupendous miracle, witnessed also by Lord Adare, the present Earl of Dunraven.

* * *

In the same paper is published an interesting account of "The Willington Ghost," "A Night in the Haunted Mill," and "What Mr. Hudson Heard." This haunted mill was some years ago visited by the late William Howitt. Forty years ago a Dr. Drury spent a night in the haunted house with a friend, Mr. Thomas Hudson. He saw the ghost, which he described at the time as "a female, attired in greyish garments, with one hand pressed upon her breast as in pain, and the other extended towards the door," and as the ghost approached his friend he gave a most awful yell, fell, and remained unconscious for three hours.

* * *

Now, for the first time after forty-five years, Mr. Hudson, the friend, gives his account of the strange noises they heard, and of Drury's "hideous yell," when "he sprang up with his hair standing on end, the picture of horror. He fainted and fell into my arms like a lifeless piece of humanity."

* * *

This is another of the ghost revivals pervading contemporary literature—revivals as well of the Supernaturalism of Shakespeare and Goethe. But the effect of Modern Spiritualism—the carefully observed and scientifically investigated facts of to-day—upon our literature is only in its crude beginnings. The time is not distant when it will be all-pervading.

REVIEWS.

PALINGENESIA; or the Earth's New Birth. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet and Co.

This book purports to be the joint production of "Theosopho, a Minister of the Holies, and Ellora, a Seeress of the Sanctuary," and to describe future events as seen in a series of visions. It is one of that class so numerous now-a-days which are no less the perplexity of the Spiritualist, than the scoff of the sceptic. Well meaning, and up to a certain point rational and practical, it nevertheless deals in aspirations and predictions the most extravagant and contrary to the nature of things; and yet is written with so much earnestness as to suggest, on the part of its author or authoress,—for their plurality is not invariably maintained,—complete unconsciousness of the incongruity of the parts and incoherence of the whole. Animated by a strong sense of justice and piety, it propounds schemes for the reformation of Church and State, even to providing a new doctrine and ritual for the former, with an indifference to orthodoxy worthy of a Gnostic, and a minuteness of ecclesiastical detail worthy of a Levite. Not content with this, "Palingenesia" anticipates the time when the planet itself, as well as its inhabitants, will be regenerated, and not only rearranges the disposition of sea and land on the surface, placing them in alternating stripes like the bars of the Zebra, but, borrowing the idea of Lord Lytton's "Coming Race," peoples the earth's interior, and traverses it in all directions with railways. To the volume which contains all this is added one of plates and diagrams, two dozen in number, elaborate, large, and coloured. Whether the book is intended to be taken literally or allegorically, is not stated, and we are unable to decide. That it has been a labour of love and one involving no ordinary expenditure of time, labour, ingenuity, and money, is beyond doubt. But so also, we fear, is the prospect of its finding but little appreciation by the public, for the judgment, which ought to have presided over its composition, is sadly conspicuous by its absence. We say this with regret, for we recognise and respect its feeling and intention. But our duties to Spiritualism are paramount; and it is Spiritualism which has to bear the responsibility of the shortcomings of its professors. When will Spiritualists understand that things are not necessarily Divine because spiritual, and that abnormal mentality is not necessarily inspiration?

A SHORT SERMON FOR SPIRITUALISTS.

An amusing American story relates how a member of the National Congress offered a wager to a fellow member that he could not recite correctly "the Lord's Prayer." The bet was promptly accepted by the second, who immediately repeated the following:—

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

"I—," said the first one with a big oath or two, but drawing out his purse and handing over the ten dollars, "I didn't think you could ha' done it."

Supposed citations from the Bible, not quite so bad as this, even by intelligent people, are not rare. How many have attributed to that book Franklin's well-known Parable, or Sterne's pretty as well as pious sentence, "He tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb," or the popular saw "A merciful man is merciful to his beast," or the statement that "Eve ate the apple," or that Saul consulted "the witch of Endor." But none of these probably is so generally and undoubtingly held to be genuine "scripture" as this—

"As the tree falls so it lies."

Or, as sometimes phrased—

"As the tree falls, so shall it lie."

Who has not heard this many a time adduced in proof of the great doctrine of the continuity of character after death, even to eternity? Often may it be heard from the pulpit in support of the frightful dogma of everlasting punishment. I have even found it in the published discourses of eminent divines, who evidently thought it to be strictly biblical, and equivalent to another piece of "minister's scripture" (as I was early taught to call misquoted texts), "As death leaves us, so will judgment find us."

One need not then be surprised to find it in a recent number of "LIGHT" (No. 204), in an article by a very intelligent correspondent, who cites it as setting forth the great truth that "souls take with them into the spirit world their ignorance, weakness, falsity, and selfishness, and remain in a purgatorial condition until they abandon their besetting weakness." This very important truth, which I fervently wish might be believed and profoundly felt by every human being, I am certainly not about to impugn. But I wish to say very distinctly that it cannot be rested on any such text in the Bible, for there is no such. And not only so, but the words of which it is a distortion will bear no construction that even approaches this in significance.

The proverb, for such, indeed, it has come to be, has plainly been manufactured out of part of a verse in one of the books attributed to King Solomon, called "Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher" (chap. xi. v. 3). And so palpably is it an utter misconception of the meaning of the author as to force the inquiry, "However came it into so twisted a shape?" To this I could venture an explanation, if necessary; but the sagacity of most of my readers will, no doubt, be equal to it.

But it is more important—at least, for those who incline to regard the Bible as a great thesaurus of proof texts—to shew the real meaning of the verse. And to this end I must beg indulgence for a brief expository homily, which perhaps the readers of "LIGHT" may the more readily grant as constituting for them a little variety.

The first six verses of this chapter discuss but one subject, and have a connection which, though not obvious at first to a careless reader, is plain enough when shewn. They are a discourse on the duty of a generous beneficence, one of the little sermons of which the book consists, and one by no means wanting in richness and beauty. But its pearls to be fairly seen must be strung on their thread. And as the theme cannot fail to be as welcome a one to the truly "liberal" thinker as to the so-called "orthodox," and its consideration just now may be apposite to the season, and particularly to the wants, or rather the just claims, of our invaluable periodical itself through which I speak, may I not be pardoned for a few sentences of exposition?

The discourse reads in our version thus:—

1. Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.
2. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.

3. If the clouds be full of rain, they empty *themselves* upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

4. He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

5. As thou knowest not what *is* the way of the spirit, *nor* how the bones *do grow* in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

6. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both *shall be* alike good.

COMMENTARY.

The preacher was a man of experience, and knew well with whom he had to deal in this matter; that in it most men were slow to be persuaded. Accordingly he occupies himself largely with their common objections. Most men prefer to put their money where they think it will pay best; where they can see a good return coming in from it and speedily. So he begins by an appeal directly to their selfishness, as the only spring that could at first be touched, and bids them observe:—

(Verse 1.) That though seed grain, broadcast over inundated land, may seem to those who have never made the experiment like mere wastefulness, or, at best, to offer but an extremely uncertain promise of a harvest, yet it was after all the surest way to secure an ample return, and well known to be so. The very circumstance, indeed, that made it *seem* unpromising was the one that guaranteed a full reward. It might be slower in coming—"after many days"—than from a drier soil; but it would be all the surer and larger.

(Verse 2.) "Seven," one of the so-called "sacred numbers," stands obviously here, as elsewhere, for indefinitely, a great many, as when it was said of Israel's enemies, "They shall flee before thee seven ways," i.e., in all directions. "Eight" seems added for emphasis, as if to say, "You need not fear any excess in this line. The calls are many, no doubt, and keep coming continually. But be not weary of them; 'Give to him that asketh thee,' though like the penitent offender he turn to thee for the seventh or seventy times the seventh time." And the reason urged for this generosity is, "You know not what calamities may yet overtake you, when either your ability to give may no longer be continued to you, or, worse still, you may become in your turn the needy sufferer, dependent on the charity of others." "Thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth."

(Verse 3.) Nor say that though you give little, you have as generous a heart as any. "If the clouds be full of water they empty themselves upon the earth," giving not meagrely, but to their exhaustion. Nor again say that you are not sure but that you might do more good in some other way. Quite possibly; but don't be over particular about this. If the tree falls in any direction, south or north, *there it is*, to be made useful. Your benefactions might possibly be better ordered in their fall; but let not this prevent their falling. They will be found, wherever they are, and put to use. Can anything else be meant?

(Verse 4.) Nor be too keen-eyed for every discouraging circumstance, looking in all directions for hindrances and reasons for delay. Time spent only in watching the wind and clouds will bring no harvest.

(Verse 5.) "But *how* is the reward of my beneficence ever to get to me?" says the objector. "They whom I help will probably never be able to help me; and, alas! as the world goes, too often would not if they could. The ways of Providence must be very mysterious that shall ever bring the widespread charities that you ask of me back in the blessings you promise." Yes, faltering sceptic, they are so; but "thou knowest not the works of God." The intricate web of His arrangements is too tangled a puzzle for you. Even the way in which your own body came into being you do not understand. Everywhere appear methods of His work which you cannot trace. The wisdom that framed and animated your complex and wonderful being can cause "all things to work together for good" to you, along lines every one of which is out of your sight.

(Verse 6.) Therefore excuse not yourself on any grounds from a generous beneficence in your youth, nor yet in your old age. Perhaps even the smaller sums which the former season enables you to bestow "shall prosper" as much to their end as the half-promised gifts of the latter; if not more widely in the world, at least in your own heart, saving you from a shrivelled soul that so often sits starving amid great abundance. You are

sent into the field, not for the morning only, nor yet for the evening only, but for the day. Let the swift-approaching night but quicken your diligence, for the Master saith, "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be."

Have I, in offering a critical correction, taken advantage of my opportunity to preach too long a sermon? And, moreover, to discuss a topic not belonging distinctively to Spiritualism? The truly large-hearted will readily forgive me. And Spiritualists who have learned to any purpose the great lessons of their faith will feel that, though the duty I have urged belongs, indeed, to all mankind, under every variety of creed, they of all men are the last who can consistently ignore it.

JOSEPH D. HULL.

3, Copeland-place, Boston, Massachusetts.

EXTRAORDINARY SPIRITUALISTIC REVELATIONS IN BLACKBURN.

Under this heading the *Blackburn Standard*, of the 27th ult., gives the following story without note or comment of any kind:—

"About six months ago a young woman, some fifteen or sixteen years of age, then living in Lansdowne-street, Witton, daughter of a Mrs. Rooney, a widow, began to attend the Spiritualist meetings held in the Science and Art School, Paradise-lane, Blackburn. She had attended several meetings before her mother found out the fact, but when she did she reprimanded her very severely for having missed her own school to attend such a place, and forbade her ever going again. However, the Sunday following found the girl at the forbidden meetings, and when she went home to tea Mrs. Rooney asked her daughter had she been to school, but her reply was, 'No, I have been to hear the Spiritualists.' Mrs. Rooney immediately made the girl put away her Sunday clothes in the drawer, and would not allow her to go out of the house again that day for having disobeyed her commands. The Sunday following the girl pleaded so much with her mother to allow her to go to the meeting in the afternoon that Mrs. Rooney wondered to herself 'Whatever can there be that attracts the girl so much that she has seemed to lose all interest in her own school?' After a long pleading Mrs. Rooney said, 'Well now, I will let you go this time, but you must never ask me again.' When the girl went home to tea she told her mother what a good lecture she had listened to, and added, 'I am sure you would have liked it had you been there.' She then began to ask her mother to let her go at night, and urged, 'You might go with me and hear and see for yourself what sort of meetings they are.' Mrs. Rooney said, 'I will go and see for myself, and if I disapprove of the meetings you shall never go again.' So she prepared herself and they went together. After the address, several of her neighbours who attended the spiritualist meetings went to her and asked her how she liked the lecture. She replied, 'Better than I expected when I came here.' They then invited her to go with them, and told her they were going to hold a private meeting in the house of one of the friends. When they arrived at the house of the party they formed a circle and sat with their hands placed flat on the top of the kitchen table. In a little while the table began to move, and questions were asked which the table answered by spelling messages in a way that to the uninitiated would seem singular and strange. One of the party repeated the alphabet, and when the various letters were reached that formed the words the leg of the table lifted and knocked on the floor. Thus one message after another was given. After this an alphabet-card was laid on the table and two persons lightly held a thin stick between their fingers. In a little time the tip of the stick began to point to various letters and the messages spelled out, but much quicker than with the table. Mrs. Rooney sat and watched, but when the people told her that the messages were being given by spirits she shook her head sceptically, and when she went home she said to herself 'I will never believe the messages were given by spirits unless they will do the same for me when I am alone.' The following morning she determined to try if she could get a message, and as she got her living by washing clothes she set her boiler fire going and filled the boiler with water. While the water was heating she locked the door, pulled down the blind, so that no one could see through the window what she was doing, got her little table, and tried her first experiment in Spiritualism. Before giving the result

of the experiment it would be as well to go back some twenty-five years in the history of Mrs. Rooney. At that time she was a young woman living with her parents when she made the acquaintance of a young man of whom her parents very much disapproved. The acquaintance ripened into courtship, and rather than give up her sweetheart she left home and got a situation as a servant in a gentleman's family. From the day she left home to the day she tried the experiment with the spirits she had never heard from any member of her family, and did not know whether they were living or dead; or if living, where they were. On sitting down at her table on the Monday morning mentioned, she heard a bell ringing, and thought there must be some one dead, and that the bell she heard must be the bell of St. Mark's Church. In a few minutes after her hands had been placed upon the table it began to move, and spelled in the same manner she had seen the night before, 'The joy-bells are ringing.' The next message was for her to procure an alphabet-card and stick, and messages would be given to her by those means. These she procured and proceeded as she had seen her friends the previous night. Shortly the stick began to move over the letters of the alphabet, and then began to point to the letters and figures composing the following words:—'Your brother John is alive, and lives at 28, East-street, Weymouth, write to him.' When her daughter came home from the mill she told her what she had been doing, and directed her to write to the above address and ask if John Hoskins lived there, as the writer was very much interested in knowing whether he did or not. She signed the letter 'A friend of the family.' In a few days she received a letter saying that John Hoskins did live at that address, and he wished to know who there was in Blackburn knew him and felt interested in his welfare. A second letter was then sent saying the writer of the letters was his sister Mary. On receipt of this, John immediately prepared to go to Blackburn and see his sister, and the result of the journey was that, although twenty-five years had elapsed since they separated, the moment he set eyes on Mrs. Rooney he recognised her as his long-lost sister. To make a long story short, Mr. Hoskins explained to her his circumstances, and how his affairs were financially, and said he would gladly take her and her daughter home with him, and provide for them, as his circumstances would allow him to do so. This offer Mrs. Rooney accepted, and Mr. Hoskins provided her with sufficient money pay the travelling expenses of herself and daughter, as well as the carriage of her household furniture from Blackburn to Weymouth. Mrs. Rooney left Blackburn for her new home on the 5th December, 1884. The messages given to Mrs. Rooney purported to have been given by the spirits of her mother, who passed away about twelve years ago, and Tom Dunn, a young man she knew before she left home. Of course, when Mr. Hoskins was over in Blackburn he inquired from his sister how she got his address, and when she let him see the method by which she received it he was amazed, never having seen or heard anything of Spiritualism before."

The Christian Register, an organ of the Unitarians of the United States, says, in a recent number:—"When tables, without contact with any persons, move; when music comes from a locked piano; when writings come without human agency, facts are presented which ought to be investigated. They have been too long left to the explanations of those who are incompetent to investigate. Many acknowledge the facts without accepting the explanation of them put forward by Spiritualists. We therefore welcome the proposition for establishing a society for investigating them upon purely scientific principles." This is pretty well for our Unitarian contemporary. A quarter of a century seems rather long for coming to a rational conclusion.

La Chaine Magnétique reports an exhibition of Stuart Cumberland's faculty of finding, blindfolded, small concealed objects, and of pointing out the seat of pain felt by any person with whom he is in contact. Cumberland says that he has had the faculty from his childhood, but has cultivated it. One condition of the successful use of it is, that the person who has concealed the object shall continuously and distinctly think of it, and where he has placed it, while Cumberland holds his hands. He says that the exercise of it is followed by fatigue of the brain and exhaustion of nerve-force. "To us," says the *Chaine Magnétique* "Cumberland passes, unconsciously, into a state of temporary spontaneous sleep-waking, when the mind cognises without the use of the external senses, as in the ordinary waking state."

MATERIALISATIONS AND TRANSFIGURATIONS.

In a celebrated letter of Mr. A. Russel Wallace to the *Banner of Light* on Materialisations—which was translated for the *Revue Spirite* of December, 1882, and from which I retranslate it now, not having the original—that "Prince of Science so universally known and respected," as the *Revue* so truly calls him, makes the following remarks:—

"With all these phenomena, two conditions determine the nature and the character of the manifestations. First, when the conditions are exceedingly favourable, forms may be produced apart from the medium. Secondly, when the conditions are less favourable, they can *alone* be produced by loosing the medium from his bonds. In this case the medium is transfigured; which is, in many instances, only one degree less marvellous than the other. Of this latter class I have seen a good number of examples with different mediums."

Now, if this be true, which few if any in the flesh now doubt, I would ask a simple question depending on it. Does anybody know of any one single control (who must know whether Professor Wallace's *dicta* are true or not), that has acknowledged this second proposition, or is likely to do so?—one, for instance (for there is almost, if not always, a talking control in the cabinet), who will boldly and honestly enunciate from his recess: "That, ladies and gentlemen, is the real thing, for you will shortly see the medium and myself together, which will prove it; yet it takes a good deal out of the medium, and we wish to spare him all we can. But this other condition, ladies and gentlemen, which has the advantage of not fatiguing the medium, and gives ourselves less trouble, is of the second class, but is, as the Professor acknowledges, only one degree less marvellous than the other, therefore we give it you to shew our powers, for we can transform our medium, making him short or tall, according to our devices; young or old, dark or fair, transmogrifying every feature; and, wonder of all, giving the appearance even of a change of sex." Had the controls said this, since they can do it, they would have often saved the mediums much contumely, often quite undeserved on the medium's part, as well as warded off general dishonour to their cause, and by so doing would only have given evidence of that common-sense which they greatly lack.

As this candour in controls is most rare, if not unprecedented, I am brought to my point; and the fact remains that the control who has only once been proved to have brought out his medium in the second condition referred to by Mr. Wallace, under pretence that it was the first condition referred to by the Professor, has plainly forfeited his claim to be implicitly relied upon in any other respect. We hear a good deal from writers on materialisations of the medium being heard coughing or groaning in the cabinet while the forms are outside; but what proof have we that this coughing and groaning is not imitated by the talking-spirit in the cabinet? I mean, of course, if ever he has but once been proved to have perpetrated deception. This is a proof, I fear, that souls may sometimes rather lose moral sense on leaving earth than gain it; as well, indeed, as lose that craft and common-sense which we generally find among men here, even when the moral sense seems departed. But are we on this account to jump to the conclusion of one of your correspondents in your number of December 13th, who says: "I believe it is rare that departed souls communicate through mediums." I think not. Your correspondent imputes such communications to "irresponsible beings of a sub-human order." But, I would ask, where did these "irresponsible beings" get our alphabet, and how do these "sub-humans" learn to spell? Almost all we know about these beings is through their being able to spell just like ourselves. Now we all know that the three R.'s cannot

be learnt in a day, and we find that these beings not only spell, write, and calculate, exactly like ourselves, but their modes of expression are the same, shewing plainly that they have been, at some time or other, in the same sort of schools and the same sort of society as we have ourselves; that in England they speak English, as a rule, and in France they speak French, and, for the matter of that, in China they speak Chinese. And where, too, do these "sub-humans," as sub-humans, gain knowledge, often so far above their superiors and questioners, if they be "sub-human"? How is it that many of these "sub-humans" who communicate habitually in English, write also well and grammatically in foreign languages, ancient and modern? Where did these go to school? Where do they learn these human accomplishments if they are not human themselves, or, if young when they die, learning them from fellow human beings in the other life? How is it that these our alleged "subs" understand so well our habits and customs? Will it be said that, as *invisible* sub-human beings, they learn to talk with us, learn to read with us, constantly keep our society, and know as much and generally more than we do, they knowing everything of us, and we knowing nothing of them? If so, then, how can they be our "subs"? But *have* invisible "subs" all these privileges? I doubt it. I had thought that the knowing of our down-sitting and uprising, the understanding of our thoughts afar off, the compassing our path and our lying down, and being acquainted with all our ways, were the attributes of a very high nature and not those of our "subs." And rather, is not the theory of sub-human communication with men as an explanation of Spiritualism, an anomaly, a paradox, and a sham?

W. R. P.

DIRECT SPIRIT-WRITING.

Le Spiritisme (Paris) publishes the following letter:—

"Yesterday, being in London, a lady proposed that I should accompany her to 12, Old Quebec-street, the residence of a psychographic medium, named Eglinton. On our arrival we found that he was absent, but expected to return shortly. We waited. We found a lady there with the same object. She spoke French, and in conversation I found that, although a believer, she had been a little shaken in the thought that it was altogether right to inquire of spirits, by some conversation she had had recently with some one who had cited some passage of Scripture. I argued in favour of inquiry, and while doing so the medium came in. This terminated our discussion, and the lady sat down at the table with us. The table was a plain uncovered one, and the room was well lighted. The medium invited the lady to take in her hand a pair of slates in a folding frame, shutting together like a book, with lock and key. Between the slates he asked her to place a small piece of pencil, and then lock them together. We then all joined hands. The lady expressed a strong desire that she might have a communication from her mother, and immediately there came sounds of rapid writing; then three taps announced the cessation of the communication. On the slates being opened imagine our astonishment at seeing the whole interior of the slates filled with a long message, which, on reading, we found to be a commentary upon the conversation between the lady and myself before the medium came in, concluding with an exhortation to maintain an irreproachable life, and promising her happiness on her entering the world of spirits.

"When it came to my turn, I wrote, quite apart, upon one of the slates, that it would give me happiness if I could receive some message from my brother Jules. Closing the slates I placed them on my chair and sat upon them. I then joined hands with the rest, and immediately I heard sounds of writing. These ceasing I opened the slates, and found a long communication from my brother, recommend-

ing patience to me, and assuring me that he was happy in his new life.

"I could enlarge much upon the incidents of this séance, but limit myself to expressing my astonishment at a message being written in a few seconds, which would take a quarter of an hour for a mortal to write.

"No sceptic of a candid mind could resist conviction in the presence of such marvels.

A. GRICOURT.

"Southampton, November 26th, 1884."

SPIRITUALISM IN THE PROVINCES.

GLASGOW.—In view of the unfortunate circumstances in which one of the worthiest veterans in the spiritual cause, Mr. J. J. Morse, is at present placed, the appeal of Mrs. Maltby, as published in "LIGHT," was last Sunday brought forward for consideration at the forenoon séance of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists. It was then and there unanimously resolved that something be done. Accordingly a subscription list on behalf of Mr. Morse has been opened by Mr. James Robertson (president), and it is confidently anticipated a substantial sum will soon be collected. It was also agreed that the proceeds of the Society's séance on the following Tuesday should be applied to the same object. The feelings of Glasgow Spiritualists towards Mr. Morse are those of admiration and respect; it was therefore an easy task for Mr. Robertson, as chairman of the evening meeting, to quicken the sympathies of the Spiritualist portion of the audience for the worker, who has spent his energies in the cause "not wisely, but too well," so far as his own health is concerned. Last Sunday evening (28th ult.), the platform was occupied by Mrs. Wallis, the subject of her guides' discourse being: "The Gospel of Gloom v. The Gospel of Gladness." The deliverance was forcible, and, on the whole, well-sustained. It was argued that every form of teaching, or preaching, which exercised a fettering influence upon individual thought, judgment, and opinion, and which curtailed the outlook of struggling humanity into the future—limiting its horizon to the narrow radius of the physical life—was a gospel of gloom. In the same category were classed dogmatic Theology and Materialism, inasmuch as the influence which they respectively exerted upon human life, hope, and effort was paralysing and depressing. On the other hand it was claimed for Spiritualism that its special feature was the message of gladness and bright promise it conveyed, cheering the most those who needed most cheer, whilst it sustained all by the unlimited prospect of future growth, happiness, and blessed achievement it opened up for the toilers of the earth. Mrs. Wallis will also speak next Sunday, while her husband ministers to the Spiritualists of Newcastle and Shields.—ST. MUNGO.

NEWCASTLE.—Dr. Andrieu, of Amiens, delivered an address, in the French language, upon "Animal Magnetism," in the Central Hall, Hood-street, on Thursday, December 18th, before the members and friends of the Cercle Littéraire Français. He illustrated his lecture with experiments upon the well-known mesmeric sensitive, R. Nesbit, commonly called "Dick, the Pit Lad." These experiments were very successful, especially in view of the fact that the sensitive did not know a word of French, and that he and Dr. Andrieu had only met for the first time an hour or two previous to the lecture. Some of the experiments were performed without the utterance of a word or sound of any sort, and with the sensitive turned with his back to the operator, the proceedings eliciting applause from the very select audience assembled. M. Grand, president of the Cercle, presided.

STONEHOUSE.—The following course of lectures will be delivered through the mediumship of Mr. W. Burt, at the Sailors' Welcome Lecture Hall (opposite Siloam Chapel), Union-place, Stonehouse, on Sunday evenings at 7:—January 4th, subject: "The Death of Satan;" 11th, "The Cleansing of the Sanctuary;" 18th, "The First Resurrection;" 25th, "The Second Death." Services are also held in the above hall every Sunday morning at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

A LADY PROFESSOR.—Mrs. Pierce, of Sharpville, some years ago gave 10,000dol. to the Buchtel College, Akron, Ohio, to institute a chair of English Literature, to be filled by a woman. It recently became vacant, and the trustees began to inquire for a male professor. This brought a protest from Mrs. Pierce. She said if there was no woman fitted for the post in America, one should be imported. It is now filled by a woman.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

The *Saratoga Eagle* of November 22nd, says:—"If what are called spiritual phenomena are real, they afford corroboration of the Scriptural doctrine of a life beyond the grave. The scientific investigation of them, which has lately been proposed, is commended on all sides. The growing demand for demonstrable truth renders it probable that means for establishing a school for psychical investigation will soon be forthcoming."

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

The Conduct of Circles.—By M.A. (Oxon.)

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment.

If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist, on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and, if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct sêances, and what to expect.

There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded. The bulk of Spiritualists have gained conviction thus.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament, and preferably of the female sex; the rest of a more positive type.

Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, and in comfortable and unconstrained positions, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential; and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times, at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. Guess at the reason of your failure, eliminate the inharmonious elements, and introduce others. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful sêance.

The first indications of success usually are a cold breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitching of the hands and arms of some of the sitters, and a sensation of throbbing in the table. These indications, at first so slight as to cause doubt as to their reality, will usually develop with more or less rapidity.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let some one take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this, if there be a real desire on the part of the Intelligence to speak with you. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restrictions on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means; if the attempt to communicate deserves your attention, it probably has something to say to you, and will resent being hampered by useless interference. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous, and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, or by means of form manifestations, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer. Increased light will check noisy manifestations.

Lastly. Try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The following is a list of eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; *Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; *Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; *Dr. Ashburner, *Mr. Rutter, *Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, at Berne; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of Petersburg; Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Captain R. Burton; Professor Cassal, LL.D.; *Lord Brougham; *Lord Lytton; *Lord Lyndhurst; *Archbishop Whately; *Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning; Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; Professor W. Denton; Professor Alex. Wilder; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex-Judges of the U.S. Courts; Victor Hugo; Baron and Baroness von Vay; *W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; *Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; *Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; *Epes Sargent; *Baron du Potet; *Count A. de Gasparin; *Baron L. de Guldenstübbe, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. S. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of *Russia and *France; Presidents *Thiers and *Lincoln, &c., &c.

IS IT CONJURING?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See *Psychische Studien* for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS, writing to the editor of *Licht, Mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—"As a Prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. . . . Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism, and also the individuality of the spirit 'in spiritual manifestation.'"

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bedroom, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butleroff, in St. Petersburg, to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, December 6th, 1887.